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SPRAGUE-ASSASSINATIONS

PHILADELPHIA (AP) -- INSTEAD OF ANSWERING QUESTIONS, THE HOUSE ASSASSINATIONS COMMITTEE'S RECENT REPORT ON THE MURDERS OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY AND THE REV. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. WAS A ''HOAX,'' ACCORDING TO THE COMMITTEE'S FORMER CHIEF COUNSEL, RICHARD SPRAGUE.

''ALL THEY DID WAS EVOLVE ANOTHER CONSPIRACY THEORY,'' SPRAGUE SAID IN AN INTERVIEW PUBLISHED IN THE SUNDAY BULLETIN.

THE FORMER ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEY SERVED AS THE COMMITTEE'S IEF COUNSEL FOR SIX MONTHS IN 1976-77 BEFORE RESIGNING IN A DISPUTE WITH THE PANEL'S LEADERS.

THE COMMITTEE'S 686-PAGE REPORT, RELEASED LAST WEEK, CONCLUDED THAT ''IT WAS POSSIBLE ... THAT AN INDIVIDUAL ORGANIZED CRIME LEADER, OR A SMALL COMBINATION OF LEADERS, MIGHT HAVE PARTICIPATED IN A CONSPIRACY TO ASSASSINATE PRESIDENT KENNEDY.''

THE COMMITTEE ALSO CONCLUDED THAT THERE WAS A ''95 PERCENT'' CHANCE THAT MORE THAN ONE GUNMAN FIRED AT KENNEDY AND THAT THE BROTHERS OF JAMES EARL RAY ''PROBABLY'' ASSISTED HIS FLIGHT AFTER THE MURDER OF KING.

''IT IS OUTRAGEOUS AND IRRESPONSIBLE FOR THEM TO SPEND $5.4 MILLION TO PRODUCE A REPORT THAT SAYS THIS 'MIGHT HAVE' HAPPENED OR THAT 'PROBABLY OCCURRED,''' SPRAGUE SAID.

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''LET THEM ANSWER THE QUESTIONS ONE-BY-ONE. WHO ARE THE CONSPIRATORS? HOW DID THEY GET TOGETHER? WHEN DID THEY GET TOGETHER?''

SPRAGUE GAINED A NATIONAL REPUTATION AS THE DOGGED SPECIAL PROSECUTOR OF THE KILLERS OF UNITED MINE WORKERS INSURGENT JOSEPH YABLONSKI. HE TRACKED THAT CONSPIRACY THROUGH SEVERAL LAYERS OF THE UMW TO FORMER UMW PRESIDENT W.A. ''TONY'' BOYLE, WHO IS NOW IN PRISON FOR ORDERING THE ASSASSINATION.

SPRAGUE SAID HE HAD FORMED NO PERSONAL OPINION ON WHETHER THE KENNEDY OR KING DEATHS RESULTED FROM CONSPIRACIES.

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HSCA –
Sprague reflects the
lone-assassin pre-
concept with which
he began & did not alter